

Head Start programs serve just 19 percent of eligible migrant and seasonal children. By comparison, the regional Head Start programs serve approximately 60 percent of their eligible population. This shortfall leaves 130,000 children of migrant and seasonal workers and their families out of any opportunity in a Head Start program. Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs serve both infants and toddlers. Early Head Start funds are only available to full-year programs and thus leave the migrant and seasonal programs to provide full-day services to both infants and toddlers without the benefit of extra program funds or technical assistance funds.

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start is already spreading its funds thin in order to sustain these programs and serve these very needy kids.

Migrant and seasonal programs are funded out of a 13 percent set-aside in the Head Start annual appropriations along with Indian Head Start, children with disabilities, training and technical assistance, program review, and research and demonstrations. Over the last 8 years, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs have consistently received 4 percent or less of the Head Start annual appropriations.

The Republican Head Start bill now includes an amendment that claims to assist migrant and seasonal children. This addition, however, would take money away from popular training and technical assistance programs and provide only a marginal increase in funds to these needy children, less than a 1 percent increase in funding to address the needs of over 130,000 children that are neglected by this bill. Moreover, this formula provides no guaranteed funding to eligible migrant and seasonal children. It is a year-to-year gimmick, and what we need and these children need is a real and reliable increase in resources and a revenue source for these services.

Based on current program funding, it would cost almost an additional \$750 million to achieve near parity between Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and regional Head Start. Completely closing this funding gap between Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and regional Head Start may be unrealistic in the near future, but the recommendations are designed to move the programs toward parity by making a modest increase in funding for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs and Indian Head Start programs.

Today, before the Committee on Rules, I proposed an amendment that would help solve this problem in a substantial way. My proposal would increase funds sufficient to provide services to an additional 10,000 children of migrant and seasonal working families. The proposal would also stabilize funding for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start with the floor of 5 percent of the total appropriation. This amendment was drafted in such a way that it would have no negative effect on any other

Head Start program. It would not take resources from any other community or any other program in Head Start.

Though migrant and seasonal families are seemingly an invisible population, a population that puts food on our tables, a population that many times does not have the political attention or the voice in this House, they deserve equal access to the social services we provide other children suffering from poverty.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to listen to their consciences and join in my attempts to provide this relief to a neglected population in this country, a population of children that is left behind, continues to be left behind; and we have a historic opportunity to include them with the rest of the children of this country.

HUSSEIN HIDING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I have heard tonight several concerns about our ability to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and whether that indicates the prewar intelligence on Iraq's program was either incorrect or biased.

Where those weapons are today falls into several categories. Of course, they could still be hidden. Saddam had become a master of concealment. Please remember that in 1995 the United Nations was preparing to lift sanctions believing that Iraq had disarmed. It was only the defection of Saddam's son-in-law and the revelations that significant weapons were present that halted the U.N. from lifting those sanctions.

Perhaps Saddam did destroy the weapons after the inspectors left in 1998. Why in the world then given the costs to him would he not be forthcoming about that?

Please remember the burden of proof is clearly still on Saddam, not the United States, not the President of the United States or the United Nations to demonstrate that the destruction of weapons had occurred. Possibly the weapons had degraded over time or were destroyed in the bombing; but again, why would Saddam not be forthcoming and say so?

I believe Congress is exercising its oversight authority and has set in place procedures to review comprehensively and on a bipartisan basis the intelligence surrounding Iraq prior to the outbreak of the war and to take into account any of the dissident views on the Iraq threat within the intelligence community.

The United States Armed Forces are still trying to pacify sectors of Iraq and deal with daily attacks on U.S. soldiers west and north of Baghdad. People who have lived in a police state with no freedom of speech are unlikely to vol-

unteer information until stability and security are achieved in Iraq.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, it became apparent that the United States needed to be more vigilant about terrorism and weapons proliferation, and pay particular attention to the prospect of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) falling into the hands of groups or states that would use them against American interests, either at home or abroad. While Saddam Hussein had been essentially "contained" within Iraq for a dozen years, by 2002 it was clear that the sanctions designed to prevent him from re-arming had fallen apart. More and more foreign countries were trading with Iraq in defiance of the United Nations (UN) sanctions. There was also widespread international agreement that Hussein had not given up his efforts to acquire banned weapons.

Iraq's expulsion of UN weapons inspectors had made it virtually impossible to monitor his activities. Most governments around the world—and the United Nations itself—believed Hussein's Iraq had not disarmed itself of the lethal weapons it was known to have possessed. In early 2003, the United Nations confirmed that Iraq had hidden its chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons programs, built missiles exceeding the range limits set by the Security Council, and failed to cooperate with inspectors. Instead of disarming, Iraq responded with false claims and empty declarations.

The Bush Administration, the Clinton Administration, and the United Nations all agree that Hussein possessed a significant biological and chemical capability in 1998 when the inspectors were withdrawn. There is broad agreement that Hussein, different from any other leader, had proven himself capable of using these weapons for offensive purposes and not merely in a defensive posture.

Where those weapons are today falls into one of several categories:

1. They are hidden—Hussein has become a master of concealment. Please remember in 1995 the United Nations was preparing to lift sanctions believing that Iraq had disarmed. It was only the defection of Hussein Kamel and the revelation that significant weapons were present that halted the UN from lifting the sanctions.

2. Hussein did destroy the weapons after the inspectors left in 1998. While this is unlikely given his other behavior, the burden of proof was clearly still on Hussein—not the United States, nor President Bush, and not the United Nations—to demonstrate the destruction of weapons had occurred.

3. The weapons had degraded over time or were destroyed in the bombing or looted during the combat phase of Iraqi Freedom.

The American soldiers who fought in Iraq did so with skill, determination and bravery in the face of grave dangers. Their conquest of Iraq was a rapid, overwhelming success; and victory was attained with relatively limited civilian casualties or damage to Iraq's infrastructure. All Americans can be proud of the performance of our armed forces in Iraq and we can unite in honoring the memory of those courageous soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect their fellow Americans.

The United States has had a positive impact since the military operation in Iraq. A brutal dictator has been removed. The revelation of mass graves in Iraq has only confirmed what

we suspected: that the people most threatened by Saddam Hussein's rule of terror were the oppressed Iraqi citizens.

The disorder and political uncertainty we are witnessing in postwar Iraq, while at one level unsettling, is to some extent a reflection of how completely Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime dominated and dictated Iraqi life. International economic sanctions against Iraq have been lifted, and the international community is beginning to get involved in the reconstruction of Iraq.

The removal of Hussein has also improved the regional security situation in the Middle East. Syria has made commitments to crack down on terrorist offices in Damascus; Iranian opponents of the clerical regime in Tehran have been emboldened; the removal of the Iraqi threat has enabled the United States to announce we will end the controversial stationing of U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia; and, the release of the "road map" has re-energized the difficult but critical search for peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

There are efforts in the Congress to employ a full investigation into these difficult issues to understand whether mistakes were made, and to take action to fix them, in fulfillment of Congress's important oversight responsibilities. To date, the chairmen of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence reject a broader probe of the WMD issue.

The Coalition forces in Iraq have investigated approximately 200 of 1,000 potential sites. New information continues to come to the attention of the Coalition forces as members of Hussein's regime come forward. Since we do not know the outcome of these efforts, calls for an investigation seem premature at best.

Finally, we are beginning to see evidence that America's readiness to act against Saddam may be encouraging better behavior by other rogue states like North Korea and Sudan, which may increase the chances of peaceful resolution of our disputes with them as well.

I know there are concerns about our failure to find weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq, and whether that indicates that the pre-war intelligence on Iraq's WMD was either incorrect or biased. There have been some challenges hampering the Administration's efforts to locate Iraq's WMD program, such as Hussein's 12-year practice of WMD concealment and deception, reluctance of Iraqi WMD scientists to discuss their past works and fears of reprisal, and the looting of suspected WMD sites.

I believe Congress is exercising its oversight authority and has set in place procedures to review comprehensively, and on a bipartisan basis, the intelligence surrounding Iraq prior to the outbreak of war, and to take account of any dissident views on the Iraqi threat within the intelligence community. The U.S. armed forces are still trying to pacify sectors of Iraq and to deal with daily attacks on U.S. soldiers west and north of Baghdad. People who have lived in a police state with no freedom of speech are unlikely to volunteer information until stability and security are achieved in Iraq. We must all remember, 30 years of living under a dictatorship cannot be reversed overnight.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my time out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

SAVE HEAD START

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the distinguished gentleman from Maryland and the distinguished gentleman from California and the Chair of our Black Caucus who will be coming up in a minute for organizing this important discussion on the future of Head Start.

Later in the week, the House of Representatives will consider H.R. 2210, a bill that radically alters the Head Start program. H.R. 2210 is ill-conceived and ill-devised. It sacrifices accountability and oversight in favor of standardized testing of 4-year-olds. It teaches our children a wrong lesson on discrimination by repealing current civil rights protections and allowing programs to discriminate in their hiring practices based on religion. It gambles with our children's future by diverting already limited resources into experimental block grants that can be diverted to other Federal programs.

H.R. 2210 is a classic bait and switch bill. The major changes in and new requirements under title I are not contained in title II of the bill, which creates an experimental block grants program for Head Start in eight States. This overhaul reverses the precedent in achievement that was created by the No Child Left Behind Act.

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NCLB seeks to close the achievement gap through strong standards and stronger Federal oversight. H.R. 2210 will only damage the integrity and efficiency of the program by redirecting resources to a block grant system and neglecting Federal standards and oversight.

Indeed, changing the funding formula to block grants under Title II creates a daunting scenario for Head Start. The four eligibility requirements under Title II do not address quality or expertise. The legislation requires the bare minimum of the eight participating States. All that a State has to do is to have an existing preschool system, a basic standard for school readiness and

basic requirements for the allocation of Head Start funding.

All 50 States meet these minimum requirements, but too few provide quality service. For example, only three States currently provide all the services needed to get at-risk children ready to learn. These States provide the same set of eight comprehensive services required of Head Start through State-run pre-K programs. At present, there is simply no clear body of research demonstrating the effectiveness of State pre-kindergarten programs.

Let me also elaborate on other shortcomings of the proposal to change Head Start into a block grant program. Title II of H.R. 2210 does not specify minimum thresholds on class size, class-staff ratios or curriculum content. It calls on each State to create its own school readiness standards and own criteria for measuring achievement. With State preschool programs varying greatly in content and quality, how can we ensure that low-income children from across the Nation will receive a quality education?

H.R. 2210 also does not contain adequate evaluation and oversight requirements. Instead of annual reports and on-site evaluation by the HHS every 3 years, States under the block grant program will not be held to any minimum threshold requirements on quality or appropriateness of their State plans. This is a giant step backwards for the Head Start program.

Finally, the bill allows the States to use Head Start funds to supplement other Federal programs. Governors may be able to use this money to cover budget deficits in their States. My home State of California receives over \$800 million in Federal moneys for Head Start. California is now suffering from a budget deficit in excess of \$38 billion. With the block grant proposal, my State could divert TANF and Title I preschool funds to offset the State's budget deficit, then use the Head Start block grant to fund TANF and Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This loophole allows States to reduce Head Start funding legally, which severely shortchanges our low-income children.

Mr. Speaker, this is the wrong way to go.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CARSON of Indiana addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DO NOT BLOCK GRANT HEAD START

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.